

Amendments to the Specification

Please insert the following new paragraph on page 1, lines 2:

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a divisional application of United States Application No. 09/773,840, filed January 31, 2001, now United States Patent No. 6,652,128.

Please replace the paragraph at page 10, line 15, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--Figure 7 shows a variety of opening shapes and patterns for use in the present invention. The opening can be arranged in aligned or offset rows as shown in figures 7A and 7B. The openings can be circles, squares, triangles as shown in Figures 7A, 7B and 7C respectively or any other shape. The pattern of openings can be a combination of different sizes and shapes as shown in Figures 7D and 7E. The openings can be arranged to form large patterns as shown in Figure 7F. The size, spacing, arrangement, rotation/orientation and combination of openings are selectable based on a desired result for an illumination pattern. The holes preferably should be small enough to allow for a dense pattern while not significantly weakening the cover layer. It has been discovered that the holes should be clear of ash or foreign matter that may interfere with light transmission. Hole sizes preferably between .0100 and .060" have been shown to optimize the back lighting effect disclosed herein, including all increments therebetween. However, other sizes are certainly suitable, provided the backlighting is still obtained.--

Amendment to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this Application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-28. (Cancelled)

Claim 29. (Currently Amended) An automotive trim panel, comprising:

 a light transmissive cover layer having a front surface and a rear surface,
 a light pipe having a first end and a second end, and a light source,
wherein said first end of said light pipe is positioned adjacent to said rear surface
of the cover layer and said second end is positioned adjacent said light source
wherein the cover layer further includes a foam layer, wherein the light pipe is
molded in the foam layer.

Claim 30. (Canceled)

Claim 31. (Currently Amended) The automotive trim panel of claim 29 ~~30~~,
wherein the light pipe is inserted in an opening formed in the foam layer by a laser.

Claim 32. (Canceled)

Claim 33. (Original) The automotive trim panel of claim 29, wherein the cover
layer is transparent.

Claim 34. (Original) The automotive trim panel of claim 29, wherein the light pipe is made of an acrylic polymer material.

Claim 35. (Original) The automotive trim panel of claim 29, wherein the light pipe is a fiber optic.

Claim 36. (Original) The automotive trim panel of claim 29, wherein the light source is a light emitting diode.

Claim 37. (Original) The automotive trim panel of claim 29, further comprising a plurality of light pipes.

Claim 38. (Original) The automotive trim panel of claim 29, further comprising a colored filter in series with the light source to change the color of the exiting light.

Claim 39-49. (Canceled)

Claim 50. (New) A method of back lighting an automotive trim panel, comprising:

forming a light transmissive cover layer having a front surface and rear surface, providing a light pipe having a first end and a second end, and a light source, wherein said first end of said light pipe is positioned adjacent to said rear surface of the cover layer and said second end is positioned adjacent said light source.

Claim 51. (New) The method of claim 55, wherein said cover layer has an elongation of 150%.

Claim 52. (New) The method of claim 55, wherein said cover layer has a tensile strength of 5000 psi.

Claim 53. (New) The method of claim 55, wherein said cover layer has a Shore Hardness between 60-100A.

Claim 54. (New) The method of claim 55, further comprising a foam layer.